

(B) Standards and Assessments (70 total points)

State Reform Conditions Criteria

(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards (40 points)

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its commitment to adopting a common set of high-quality standards, evidenced by (as set forth in Appendix B)—

(i) The State's participation in a consortium of States that— (20 points)

- (a) Is working toward jointly developing and adopting a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) that are supported by evidence that they are internationally benchmarked and build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation; and
- (b) Includes a significant number of States; and

(ii) — (20 points)

- (a) For Phase 1 applications, the State's high-quality plan demonstrating its commitment to and progress toward adopting a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) by August 2, 2010, or, at a minimum, by a later date in 2010 specified by the State, and to implementing the standards thereafter in a well-planned way; or
- (b) For Phase 2 applications, the State's adoption of a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) by August 2, 2010, or, at a minimum, by a later date in 2010 specified by the State in a high-quality plan toward which the State has made significant progress, and its commitment to implementing the standards thereafter in a well-planned way.¹

In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the

¹ Phase 2 applicants addressing selection criterion (B)(1)(ii) may amend their June 1, 2010 application submission through August 2, 2010 by submitting evidence of adopting common standards after June 1, 2010.

criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Evidence for (B)(1)(i):

- A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, executed by the State, showing that it is part of a standards consortium.
- A copy of the final standards or, if the standards are not yet final, a copy of the draft standards and anticipated date for completing the standards.
- Documentation that the standards are or will be internationally benchmarked and that, when well-implemented, will help to ensure that students are prepared for college and careers.
- The number of States participating in the standards consortium and the list of these States.

Evidence for (B)(1)(ii):

For Phase 1 applicants:

- A description of the legal process in the State for adopting standards, and the State's plan, current progress, and timeframe for adoption.

For Phase 2 applicants:

- Evidence that the State has adopted the standards. Or, if the State has not yet adopted the standards, a description of the legal process in the State for adopting standards and the State's plan, current progress, and timeframe for adoption.

Recommended maximum response length: Two pages

Introduction and context

Bipartisan commitment to fewer, clearer, higher standards

With the passage of Senate Bill 1 in the 2009 session of the Kentucky General Assembly, the Commonwealth is poised at the beginning of a new era in public school expectations, assessment, and accountability. Senate Bill 1 addresses many areas, with a primary focus on statewide adoption of: 1) new Common Core standards in seven subject areas that are fewer, clearer, and higher than current standards; and 2) a balanced assessment system aligned to the new standards. The timeline for Senate Bill 1 calls for the new system to be complete and in use by the 2011-2012 school year. There is much work to be done in order to meet this aggressive deadline.

Developing and adopting the new Common Core standards

In regards to (B)(1)(i), in May 2009, Kentucky was one of the first states to join the multi-state coalition led by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, which currently has 51 states and territories participating. *(For signed Memorandum of Agreement, see Appendix P: Common Core Standards Consortium MOA; for list of participating states, see Appendix Q: NGA News Release with List of the Participating States and Territories in the Common Core State Standards Initiative.)* The Common Core Standards Memorandum of Agreement states the following purpose for this consortium: “This document commits states to a state-led process that will draw on evidence and lead to development and adoption of a common core of state standards in English language arts and mathematics for grades K-12. These standards will be aligned with college and work expectations, include rigorous content and skills, and be internationally benchmarked.” The standards are currently in draft form, but will be finalized by the end of February / early March. *(See draft standards and supporting documentation as Evidence for (B)(1)(i) in Appendix R: Common Core Standards for English Language Arts Grades K-8, Working Draft Jan 13 2010, Appendix S: Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, Working Draft Jan 13 2010, Appendix T: Common Core State Literacy Standards for History-Science, Working Draft Jan 13 2010, Appendix U: Common Core Standards ELA Exemplars K-5, Appendix V: Common Core Standards ELA Exemplars 6-12, Appendix W: Email with Common Core Standards Completion Timeline.)*

In regards to (B)(1)(ii), Kentucky leads the pack in being prepared to adopt the Common Core. Senate Bill 1 mandates the adoption of new standards, with the first wave focused on Mathematics and English / Language Arts. Kentucky became the first state in the nation to adopt the standards, on February 10, 2010, well in advance of the criterion’s deadline of August 2, 2010. The full process and timeline for Kentucky’s adoption of the new standards is also conveyed as Evidence for (B)(1)(ii) in Appendix X: Kentucky's timeline & process for adopting Common Core. As an early adopter, Kentucky has assisted the Council of State Governments by

providing information to legislators across the nation on how the Common Core initiative in Kentucky was supported in a broad and bi-partisan way supported by the House, Senate, and Governor's office.

The direction Senate Bill 1 sets for standards in Kentucky

- Kentucky has adopted and will implement internationally benchmarked Common Core standards that focus on critical knowledge and skill, are fewer but more in-depth, communicate expectations for all students more clearly and concisely, and are aligned from elementary to postsecondary so that students can be successful at each education level
- The Commissioner of Education and the President of the Council on Postsecondary Education will ensure that college entry-level course requirements for postsecondary education are aligned with standards for Mathematics and English / Language Arts, and that eventually the new standards in all subject areas are aligned between PreK-12 and postsecondary education
- The Education Professional Standards Board and the Council on Postsecondary Education will coordinate information and professional learning sessions around the new standards for faculty and staff in all undergraduate and graduate teacher and principal preparation programs, and the Kentucky Department of Education ("the Department") will facilitate the provision of professional learning sessions for existing teachers and administrators on how to integrate the revised content standards and better integrate performance assessment
- The Education Professional Standards Board will require teacher and principal preparation programs to align their curricula with the new standards and instruct students in the use of the new academic content standards in the pre-service programs

Because adoption of the standards was only the first step, the Department and the Council on Postsecondary Education have led several cross-functional work teams that include both internal and external personnel and stakeholder representatives. (*See (B)(3) for detail on the outputs of these work teams and Kentucky's plan to fully implement Senate Bill 1.*)

(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments (10 points)

The extent to which the State has demonstrated its commitment to improving the quality of its assessments, evidenced by (as set forth in Appendix B) the State's participation in a consortium of States that—

- (i) Is working toward jointly developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice); and
- (ii) Includes a significant number of States.

In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Evidence for (B)(2):

- A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, executed by the State, showing that it is part of a consortium that intends to develop high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards; or documentation that the State's consortium has applied, or intends to apply, for a grant through the separate Race to the Top Assessment Program (to be described in a subsequent notice); or other evidence of the State's plan to develop and adopt common, high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice).
- The number of States participating in the assessment consortium and the list of these States.

Recommended maximum response length: One page

Introduction and context

Bipartisan commitment to a new balanced assessment system

As described in (B)(1), the passage of Senate Bill 1 in 2009 will reset, rationalize, and reinvigorate Kentucky's assessment system.

Given this legislative mandate, Kentucky is committed to working with three consortia of states to develop assessment tools for evaluating the Common Core standards, starting with working principles derived from an examination of successful state systems in the U.S. and high-achieving systems internationally. *(See Evidence for (B)(2), including MOUs and lists of participating states, in the consortia sections that follow.)*

Consortium 1: Smarter/Balanced

NOTE: Information regarding each of the three consortiums is a work in progress. We will add the detail for each consortium in the final days before submission.

Consortium 2: Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career

NOTE: Information regarding each of the three consortiums is a work in progress. We will add the detail for each consortium in the final days before submission.

Consortium 3: Board Exam for High Schools

NOTE: Information regarding each of the three consortiums is a work in progress. We will add the detail for each consortium in the final days before submission.

Reform Plan Criteria

(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments (20 points)

The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan for supporting a statewide transition to and implementation of internationally benchmarked K-12 standards that build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation, and high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) tied to these

standards. State or LEA activities might, for example, include: developing a rollout plan for the standards together with all of their supporting components; in cooperation with the State’s institutions of higher education, aligning high school exit criteria and college entrance requirements with the new standards and assessments; developing or acquiring, disseminating, and implementing high-quality instructional materials and assessments (including, for example, formative and interim assessments (both as defined in this notice)); developing or acquiring and delivering high-quality professional development to support the transition to new standards and assessments; and engaging in other strategies that translate the standards and information from assessments into classroom practice for all students, including high-need students (as defined in this notice).

The State shall provide its plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.

Recommended maximum response length: Eight pages

Introduction and context

Kentucky has a long history of demonstrated, bipartisan commitment to high standards and expectations for all students. As described in the State Success Factors section, Kentucky established clear expectations that all children can learn at high levels and articulated core content standards as a result of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990, which were most recently revised in 2006. As described in (B)(1) and (B)(2), Senate Bill 1 demonstrates the Commonwealth’s commitment to substantial revision of the existing standards and assessments in seven subject areas, as they are powerful tools for measuring student, school, district and state performance. This legislative mandate directs the Kentucky Department of Education (“the Department”) and the Council on Postsecondary Education (“the Council”) to plan and implement a comprehensive process for revising academic content standards in all areas, and revising the statewide assessment program for implementation in 2011-2012. Senate Bill 1 also includes clear implementation requirements and sequencing, further demonstrating Kentucky’s commitment to internationally benchmarked K-12 standards and high-quality assessments.

Following the passage of Senate Bill 1, the Department, the Council, and key implementation partners (including the Education Professional Standards Board, the Kentucky Education Association, the Kentucky School Boards Association, the Kentucky Association of School Councils, the Kentucky Educational Cooperatives, Jefferson County Public Schools, and other key stakeholder groups) collaborated to create high-quality plans for the statewide transition to and implementation of internationally benchmarked standards (from preschool through aligned postsecondary education content) and high-quality assessments tied to these standards. These plans include timelines for adoption and dissemination of standards, development of the assessments, a new approach to professional development, and many other key success factors related to Senate Bill 1 implementation. *(See Appendix GG: SB1 Standards Roll-out and Professional Development Plan Final for the detailed Senate Bill 1 deployment plan, Appendix HH: SB1 deployment work group for a list of Senate Bill 1 deployment work group members, and Appendix II: Math & English-Language Arts Common Core Standards Work Teams a list of Math and English/Language Arts Standards work group members.)*

Furthermore, because Kentucky has invested in the *Classroom Assessment for Student Learning* approach, which enables teachers to build and utilize formative assessment locally through professional learning teams, the Commonwealth is uniquely positioned to deconstruct standards into the foundations of knowledge, reasoning, performance skills, and product development capabilities that form the scaffolding students will climb to master each standard. Not only is a framework already in place for scaffolding, but districts statewide already are preparing teachers to build their local scaffolding. In addition, the process provides teachers with a key foundation of assessment literacy by teaching them how to link different kinds of learning targets directly to proper classroom and interim assessment methods. *(More detail on this will follow in Activities 3, 4, and 5.)*

In a survey that solicited stakeholders' perspectives on Kentucky's Race to the Top application, more than 80% of the 2440 respondents said that future progress in the area of standards and assessments is important or very important. In fact, when asked

about the most important strategies Kentucky should pursue, the strategies that were ranked most frequently in respondents' top three were all focused on adopting and implementing high and clear standards and aligned assessments, and providing tools for teachers to be successful in teaching those standards. Therefore, Kentucky has two **key goals** for the transition to and implementation of internationally benchmarked standards and high-quality assessments tied to these standards:

- 1) The new standards and assessments are successfully adopted and disseminated statewide, so that all Kentucky citizens – students, teachers, parents, school leaders, communities, business, etc. – are educated on and understand the new standards and assessments.
- 2) The new standards and assessments are successfully implemented in all classrooms so that all students in Kentucky are prepared for success in the 21st century.

In order to meet the Commonwealth's goals with respect to standards and assessments, there are several key activities that will be undertaken over the next few years.

Activity 1: Adopting and disseminating the Math and English/Language Arts standards

On February 10, 2010, the Kentucky Board of Education adopted the Common Core standards for Math and English/Language Arts. Additionally, a special meeting of the Board of Education, the Council on Postsecondary Education, and the Education Professional Standards Board was convened that evening for the purpose of the three groups to unanimously pass a resolution making the new Common Core State Standards the centerpiece of educational reform moving forward. While Senate Bill 1 mandates the revision for five additional subject areas, Math and English/Language Arts will be the first two subjects completed and released by the multi-state coalition. Immediately following adoption, the Department and several partner organizations began educating key stakeholders on the new standards. The following is an abbreviated list of broad-based dissemination and education activities underway, all of which will be completed by the Department, the Education Professional Standards Board, the Council, and many partner

organizations (*please see Appendix GG: SBI Standards Roll-out and Professional Development Plan Final for full list as included in Senate Bill 1 deployment plan*):

- Conduct press release/conference immediately following joint approval of standards
- Conduct trainings on orientation/awareness of standards training for Department personnel
- Communicate with key legislators to articulate the standards work and necessary resources, and meet with editorial boards to discuss standards and answer questions
- Continue strong partnership with the Prichard Committee, an organization long-dedicated to promoting educational reforms efforts in Kentucky, to facilitate a multi-faceted campaign, as well as an institutionalized leadership development program for parents, to engage key education stakeholders in the changes resulting from Senate Bill 1
- Work with additional partners like the Kentucky School Boards Association, the Kentucky Association of School Superintendents, the Kentucky Association of School Administrators, the Kentucky Education Association, the Jefferson County Teachers Association, the Kentucky Association of School Councils, Partnership for NewCities, the Kentucky Parent-Teacher Association, and others to create informational webinars and hold town hall meetings at school locations to share standards information with interested stakeholders, and provide brochures and/or other communications pieces, unique to each role group--students, parents, teachers, administrators, business community, the public, etc.--that explain the standards and their importance to be used in print media or on web sites produced by various organizations (utilizing materials and resources from the Council of Chief State School Officers)
- Hold an educator's webinar series for P-12 practitioners and institutions of higher education that includes a crosswalk document comparing new standards to old standards for use with educators in multiple settings, as well as examples of "deconstructing" standards, as described in Activity 3 below using the new approach to formative assessment as described in the next section

- Work with Kentucky Education Television to create an educators’ online learning series (P-12) through the Kentucky Virtual School
- Develop talking points & awareness resources for school and district use with parent groups and in other face-to-face group meetings amongst education stakeholders, and education-related communicators (e.g., bloggers, Twitter, Facebook, etc.)
- Develop public service announcements and guest editorials for use by all available media and publications – television, cable channels, school broadcasts, radio, magazines, journals, etc., including:
 - A series of segments on “Kentucky Tonight,” a popular Kentucky Education Television weekly public affairs discussion program, to bring to the forefront the impact new Common Core internationally benchmarked standards and assessments will have on student success and Kentucky’s economic standing in the global economy. Viewers across the state will have an opportunity to call in to the live broadcast and become part of the discussion
 - Companion articles in *Kentucky Living*, a rural, cooperative magazine and the largest circulated publication in the state, delivered monthly to 487,000 homes and businesses and read by more than 1.26 million people
 - A series of articles about standards and professional learning in *KY Teacher*, the Department’s publication that is sent directly to every public school teacher and administrator’s home monthly during the school year
- Post standards and related educational resources on Department and partner agency websites, and other education-related sites (e.g., Kentucky Education Association, Kentucky Education Television, Prichard Committee, colleges / universities), including creating a publicly accessible site on iTunes U K-12, Apple’s service that uses the iTunes Store infrastructure for managing and distributing educational audio and video content with a state department of education hosted site
- Work with Partnership for NewCities to engage a diverse group of citizens, community leaders and public officials across the state in public forums to discuss how the common standards and assessments initiative promotes the economic and social prosperity of communities, regardless of size or location

- Use existing local and regional P-16 councils that were established to broaden communication between elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educational entities to increase community understanding of the positive impact the Common Core standards and assessments will have on Kentucky families and overall economic competitiveness

A November 2009 report from the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, entitled “The Leaky Bucket,” references the significant body of research that links higher education attainment to increased employment opportunities and income, resulting in reduced spending on corrections, Medicaid, and public employee health benefits. With Senate Bill 1, Kentucky committed to adopting and implementing internationally benchmarked standards and aligned assessments as a step toward increasing higher educational attainment statewide. The outreach and education efforts detailed above will ensure that all Kentucky citizens are informed and educated about the new standards, beginning with Math and English/Language Arts, and why these fewer, clearer, higher standards and corresponding assessments are critical to drive educational change in Kentucky to prepare citizens for competing in the global economy and to ensure the Commonwealth’s economy flourishes.

Activity 2: Aligning PreK-12 and postsecondary education around the new standards

Kentucky is committed to a truly P-20 educational system aligned in preparing students for college and career readiness; in 2006, Kentucky was one of the first states to join the American Diploma Project (ADP), an effort led by Achieve, Inc. to build a coalition of states committed to increasing college readiness. As a result of joining ADP, Kentucky revised the high school graduation requirements to ensure their alignment with the Council’s pre-college curriculum, which involved increasing math requirements. Recently, conversations have also begun around increasing foreign language requirements to align with the pre-college curriculum. The Department, the Education Professional Standards Board, and the Council will continue to work together to ensure P-20 alignment as mandated by Senate Bill 1. The following activities, all of which are integrated with the overall plan for the transition

to the new standards and assessments, will continue throughout the implementation phase:

- Convene P-16 Steering Committee for Unbridled Learning Summit (a convening to discuss Kentucky's education strategy going forward) and determine intersection points with Governor Beshear's Transforming Education in Kentucky initiative
- Provide follow-up trainings after Unbridled Learning Summit; hosted by the Council and the Department, these workshops will enhance faculty understanding of the standards and how to align the new standards with post-secondary curriculum
- Refocus the Instructional Support Network to include P-16 instructional leaders (i.e. university faculty, the Network, Educational Cooperatives, and partners), with continuing P-16 Network activities to include monthly electronic newsletters and webinars to discuss topics of interest and common issues around standards
- Establish higher education networks or expert teams, including identifying lead faculty to participate in content area networks, described below in Activity 3 and trainings based on new standards (initiative led and facilitated by the Council)
- Establish a "Classroom Assessment for Learning" course in colleges of education that supports pre-service teachers' understanding and implementation of standards and assessments, specifically the way formative assessments allow teachers to make immediate instructional adjustments on student learning
- Redirect Title II, Part A, funds to support Improving Educator Quality state grants to focus more specifically on job-embedded professional learning in support of implementing the Common Core standards and assessments. The grants will create university/P-12 partnerships that deliver research based professional development programs to teachers

This coordination of education efforts will ensure that there is increased collaboration between K-12 and all public and private institutions of higher education and ensures that all educators have an understanding of the new standards. In addition, the Educational Leadership Development Collaborative, which consists of 15 Kentucky educational organizations committed to advancing student achievement, will also direct their advocacy and work on these efforts.

Activity 3: Building networks to deconstruct the standards and create high-quality, aligned instructional supports

Preparing for the standards deconstruction process

Now that the standards have been adopted, they will need to be analyzed and “deconstructed” so that all Kentucky educators are able to translate them into effective instruction and assessment for all students. Deconstructing is the process of identifying the scaffolding of learning required to master a particular standard. The Core Oversight Team (which includes Department/Council/Education Professional Standards Board staff, content consultants, faculty, Educational Cooperative and other agency leads) will establish the protocol for deconstructing the standards. In May 2010, network facilitators (content and pedagogical experts/master teachers from institutions of higher education, educational cooperatives, other educational organizations, and Department staff) began to identify the sequence of particular standards that will be deconstructed by the participating teacher leaders in each of the networks. . Simultaneously, the Department’s Division of Secondary & Virtual Learning will work with Kentucky Education Television to plan for the documentation of the deconstructing process and its inclusion in an online module for broader use and trainings. This use of online technology infrastructure will ensure that educators in all areas of Kentucky, even the most geographically remote, will have access to resources for district leadership teams and school-based professional learning teams. As described next, during Summer and Fall 2010, regional networks will convene to deconstruct all new Mathematics and English/Language Arts standards and identify and create high-quality tools and resources to ensure teachers are supported in the implementation of the standards in every Kentucky classroom.

Establishing content and administrator leadership networks

Leveraging regional networks is at the heart of Kentucky’s strategy to ensure full implementation of the new standards and

assessment system. Using a network approach enables the capacity building that is essential to strong implementation with fidelity by facilitating local practice-sharing and collaboration, establishing mechanisms for continuous communication and follow-up (as opposed to a one-time training session), increasing access to expertise so that questions can be answered more quickly than if they were to be channeled through the Department, and increasing leadership opportunities throughout the education system. The vision for the networks is that each will develop and sustain a professional learning team and community of content area leaders and administrators that possess a strong content knowledge base, knowledge of effective pedagogical content skills, and the leadership competencies needed to scale up highly effective teaching and learning practices. Given the Commonwealth's commitment to implementing Senate Bill 1, network participants will engage in a long term study of the revised standards and assessments to identify and design high-quality resources for administrators to support and teachers to successfully implement the new standards in every school and classroom.

For every content area, there will be a content area leadership network (e.g., "Science Leadership Network") which will be comprised of nine regional sites, each supporting teams from approximately 25 school districts. Every Kentucky district can enroll at least an elementary, middle, secondary and/or special education teacher leader/administrator to each network. These networks will arise out of and be supported by eight regional Educational Cooperatives and a ninth in Jefferson County, served by the Gheens Professional Development Academy. Each of the nine regional networks in each content area will be lead by a four-member team of facilitators (e.g., two Department staff people, an Educational Cooperative consultant, and a member of higher education faculty). One Department staff facilitator for each network site will be housed at the respective educational cooperative to act as a coach and mentor, assisting network participants as they implement effective practices in their own schools/districts. Please reference section (A)(2) for more description on the role of Kentucky's Educational Cooperatives and Jefferson County Public Schools in this regard. In addition, each district will name one educator in each school as the key point of contact. . These individuals will be responsible

for further assuring that timely information from the state agency gets communicated to each and every teacher. This will lead to clarity of message and higher implementation fidelity so that every student will have the benefit of being globally prepared.

In May 2010, the Department identified and met with network and design team leads to establish the Core Oversight Team referenced above in Activity 3. This team, which will include representation from all nine networks, a Department staff person (the Network Consultant), and key partners like Kentucky Education Television, is charged to:

- Ensure consistency and coherence among all of the different content / administrative networks by designing plans for the networks and identifying facilitators for each content and administrator network
- Review protocols for learning teams to ensure quality control and coherence and consistency for messages surrounding the characteristics of highly effective teaching and learning
- Identify resources and processes for deconstructing of standards and design of formative assessments
- Develop leadership experiences for facilitators and participants in the networks
- Identify and annotate exemplars of student learning and teacher resources to populate the Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System described in (C)(3)

Additionally, the Core Oversight Team identified Department field staff (i.e., Content Specialists), to be housed at Educational Cooperatives, Jefferson County Public Schools, and/or other educational agencies, to support implementation of school-based professional learning teams. These professional learning teams will work with district representatives that are part of the regional content and administrator leadership networks, and will provide the local infrastructure for continuous professional learning and collaboration to ensure implementation with fidelity and usage of the supports developed by the leadership networks (*more detail below in Activity 4 and in (D)(5)*).

Creating high-quality resources aligned to the new standards and assessments

Beginning in July 2010, the content area leadership networks, led by the Core Oversight Team, will work to create or identify resources and online materials to facilitate learning for a variety of audiences. These resources will include:

- Deconstructed standards (e.g., learning targets)
- Aligned instructional resources (e.g., lessons, units, materials)
- Vertical and horizontal alignment documents (e.g., curriculum maps, pacing guides)
- Formative assessments, measures and benchmarks
- Progress monitoring tools
- Teacher and principal informal observation and formal evaluation information
- Student work samples
- Video and podcasts of university faculty explaining critical concepts in particular content areas

These resources will be made available through the Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS) for teachers to access directly (*more detail below in Activity 4 and in section (C)(3)*). These resources will be developed and incorporated into the online system on an ongoing basis (through an established vendor), beginning with tools for the new Math and English/Language Arts standards during Summer and Fall 2010.

Activity 4: Ongoing professional learning around the new standards and assessments

Given Kentucky's commitment to Senate Bill 1, and its ambitious implementation timeline for the new standards and assessments, the work above describes how the State will enable successful implementation for all LEAs by establishing a statewide system of professional learning networks. These networks, along with the CIITS, will provide a support system to ensure that all teachers and

principals are continuously supported. Additionally, participants in the existing administrators' CEO network will serve as mentors to other superintendents who have not to date been engaged in their work around continuous school improvement efforts. The State will be working with Dr. Tom Gusky, a prominent education researcher, to develop and evaluate effective professional learning models for teachers and principals. While there is more detail on Kentucky's approach to continuous professional learning in (D)(5), the facets of the system most critical to standards and assessments are the networks described above, and the CIITS and professional learning teams as described below.

The Continuous Instructional Improvement Technology System (CIITS)

It is the Commonwealth's vision that every Kentucky teacher will have a full set of tools available at his/her fingertips to improve every student's learning. As a teacher prepares for a lesson, through the CIITS, he/she can access each student's data to identify which concepts need further exploration and attention in the classroom, access exemplary lesson/unit plans, and even view podcasts from master teachers or higher education faculty on key concepts across the standards. This online environment will allow educators to engage in dialogue about educational practice through social networking tools. Teacher use and application of the CIITS in their daily classroom practice will become an important aspect of their ongoing professional learning.

Once the first set of high-quality, aligned instructional tools have been finalized by the end of August 2010, they will be made available through the CIITS as described in more detail in (C)(3). This instructional improvement system will include the following components:

- **Curriculum Resources** will provide resources for curriculum mapping and vertical and horizontal alignment of instruction; also allow for cross-walking of the previous Kentucky standards to the new core standards and allows for development of learning progressions and learning targets.

- **Assessment Resources** will provide rich information on student learning by allowing users to build, deliver, score, and report on assessments for formative and summative purposes across all relevant levels of assessment use: classroom assessment, interim benchmark assessment, and annual accountability testing; will support assessment *for* learning by putting the results of these frequent assessments into teachers and students hands – increasing the descriptive feedback (and decreasing the evaluative feedback) and helping students and their teachers truly understand what they are learning; also will include standards-based grade book, student portfolios, and multiple measures reporting .
- **Instruction Resources** will provide instructional strategies, interventions and student learning resources, incorporating existing resources that Kentucky teachers already have and use (e.g., Encyclomedia, Kentucky Learning Depot, Kentucky Virtual Library).
- **Professional Learning Resources** will provide rich tools for teacher and principal informal observation and formal evaluation, teacher portfolios, and the evaluation of professional learning opportunities themselves; also will provide resources such as online learning courses for job-embedded professional development including custom publishing tools to support collaborative development and sharing of local content among professional learning teams and networks.
- **School Improvement Resources** will allow schools and districts to create, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their improvement efforts. The system will allow for continuous improvement planning within schools and across districts. It will also allow school and district audits to be conducted in a more efficient manner and for schools and districts to track results against a variety of data sets.

Professional learning teams

Professional learning teams, which are defined as groups of practitioners that meet and continuously connect regarding specific areas of education practice, will be a key component of the *Classroom Assessment for Student Learning* approach. Kentucky has

been working closely with Rick Stiggins to establish trained facilitators who will guide and facilitate the work at the school level. With the support of the GE Foundation, Kentucky now has over 850 trained learning team facilitators, and an *Assessment for Learning Facilitators Network* is being developed to provide ongoing follow-up sessions both online and through scheduled meetings of networks throughout the state. These trained educators are asked to facilitate ongoing learning teams in schools, colleges, and universities to deepen understanding of sound assessment practice and its relationship to student motivation and to learn how to integrate classroom assessment for learning into the teaching and learning process in concrete and specific ways. The networks described in Activity 3 are all regional professional learning teams, housed within the regional Educational Cooperatives and Jefferson County Public Schools. While the content area / administration leadership networks will be key for statewide collaboration around the new standards and assessments, individual district level leadership teams and school-level professional learning teams will provide the infrastructure to ensure ongoing professional learning, collaboration, and successful instruction aligned to the new standards in every classroom in Kentucky. Kentucky will ensure fidelity of implementation by maintaining KDE-employed staff at each of the regional sites, with centralized and coherent direction coming from the state.

As described above, over the past year the Department has emphasized and advocated for the use of professional learning teams, but full adoption has been variable across Kentucky's districts and school. As professional development is re-conceptualized over the next year (*see (D)(5) for more detail*) it will be very important that all Kentucky schools fully implement the professional learning team structure, with support provided through the Educational Cooperatives and Jefferson County Public Schools (in particular, through the partnerships established with organizations or experts who can support professional learning team implementation). The Department will support districts to provide each school with the guidance and support necessary to build and maintain effective professional learning teams, including meeting agendas and resources from district leadership teams and Educational Cooperatives and Jefferson County Public Schools. School-based professional learning teams will also provide the forums to discuss student data,

professional development, and to implement future initiatives. Because this new approach to ongoing professional learning will require a different use of teacher time in many of the Commonwealth's schools, new legislation that is expected to pass in January 2010 (*see Appendix JJ: Recommendations for Changes to Calendar and Professional Development Statutes*) will enable districts and schools to organize teachers' schedules to support professional learning team implementation and job-embedded professional learning.

Activity 5: Implementing a balanced assessment system

Through an ongoing partnership with Rick Stiggins, Kentucky has adopted the following definition of a balanced assessment system, recognizing that assessment is, in part, the process of gathering evidence of student learning to inform instructional decisions. Local district assessment systems serve to promote student success when they inform all the decisions that support and verify learning; that is, when the system serves both formative and summative purposes across all relevant levels of assessment use. Those levels of use include classroom assessment, interim benchmark assessment, and annual accountability testing. Senate Bill 1 requires the Department to re-conceptualize and rebuild the student assessment system in Kentucky to create a new balanced assessment system. This system will include many types of assessment, including authentic assessment, to ensure that educators, students, parents, and others understand what students are learning and can best support that learning. Key elements of the new system are detailed more thoroughly in Senate Bill 1, but it is worth reprising here the seven working principles from the Plan for a State Consortium Developing Balanced and Comprehensive Assessments of the Common Core Standards, as these principles will guide the Commonwealth's implementation efforts:

1) "Assessments are grounded in a thoughtful, standards-based curriculum and are managed as part of a tightly integrated system of standards, curriculum, assessment, instruction, and teacher development.

- 2) *Assessments elicit evidence of actual student performance on challenging tasks that prepare students for the demands of college and career in the 21st century.*
- 3) *Teachers are involved in the development of curriculum and the development and scoring of assessments.*
- 4) *Assessments are structured to continuously improve teaching and learning.*
- 5) *Assessment and accountability systems are designed to improve the quality of learning and schooling.*
- 6) *Assessment and accountability systems use multiple measures to evaluate students and schools.*
- 7) *New technologies enable greater assessment quality and information systems that support accountability.”*

Classroom Assessments – Curriculum-embedded classroom assessments will enable teachers to continuously assess student learning and adjust ongoing teaching to improve students’ achievement of intended educational outcomes. They are not intended for evaluative and accountability purposes. (The data from classroom assessments is to inform teachers and students; the State will not collect this information.) As part of the *Classroom Assessment of Student Learning* approach, teachers will continuously work individually and together in professional learning teams to identify curriculum-embedded sources or create classroom assessments that measure the range and depth of student learning of the standards and identify where students have reached mastery and where they are struggling. The basic approach is as follows: start every assessment with a clear purpose, start with a clear learning target, develop a sound assessment for that context, and communicate results effectively. Teachers and students will use these ongoing, embedded assessments to truly understand what students are learning, and to increase student self-assessment and opportunities for students to communicate about their evolving learning. Many Kentucky educators have already attended training sessions on this new approach to formative assessment; further training and follow-up will take place through the professional learning work described above in Activity 4.

Interim Benchmark Assessments - There is a significant body of research supporting the efficacy of formative classroom and interim assessment as the levels of application that impact student learning most. Interim benchmark assessments will be formative and local, serving to help local faculties understand how each student did in mastering each standard, so they can summarize this information to see what standards students struggle to master, and then improve instruction on those standards right away. Furthermore, these interim assessments will enable schools and districts to take stock of students' understanding of the standards at a few interim checkpoints over the course of the year, so that all levels of the educational system can make informed decisions where adjustment of the teaching and learning approach may be warranted. (This information will be critical to inform teachers and administrators at the student, classroom, school, and district levels; the State will not collect this data.) Given this approach to and purpose for interim assessment, Kentucky's students will take interim assessments at regular and specified intervals throughout the school year, which show progress toward mastery of standards. Some districts are early adopters of online, adaptive interim assessment tools; once the new standards are adopted, these districts, if they so choose, can continue to use these tools and vendors with whom they have existing contracts, as long as the assessments are tied to the new standards. For those districts that do not yet utilize an interim assessment system, the Department, working with early-adopting districts that can help to identify potential vendors, will provide support to districts to design, refine, and implement this system (and, as part of the assessments consortia included in section (B)(2), will partner with and learn from other states that plan to do the same.) Teachers will play a critical role in building and utilizing this system; as part of Kentucky's work with the State Consortium Developing Balanced and Comprehensive Assessments of the Common Core Standards described above and in section (B)(2), the State will support standards-driven systems that might include more comprehensive benchmark assessments complemented by collections of evidence that demonstrate students' abilities to meet certain standards within and across the disciplines. For Math and English/Language Arts, these systems will be developed by Fall 2010 to accompany the statewide rollout and implementation of the new standards.

Annual Assessments - Annual assessments will be common, comprehensive, cumulative assessments administered annually to measure students' mastery of the standards taught to them over a specific period. Thus, they are primarily summative in nature. They will be aligned with the Common Core standards and content, goals and academic expectations, and require students to demonstrate knowledge, comprehension, application, and higher order cognitive skills. These assessments will align with those developed through the work of the multi-state consortia described in (B)(2). Because reading and math are critical instructional components that facilitate student development, the annual assessments of the Common Core standards will be linked to developmental scales in reading and mathematics (e.g., Lexile and Quantile Frameworks). As a result of the linking process, educators can incorporate the results into their instructional decision-making. And, as supported by the consortium, the Department will support districts interested in implementing locally designed and evaluated assessments that can be used for accountability purposes. The State Board of Education, at its December 9th meeting, approved the use of end of course assessments as a high school achievement measure (please note that given high school scheduling, these exams may not necessarily be annual). The Department is collaborating with Marc Tucker to study deployment of the Center for Education and the Economy's "Tough Choices, Tough Times" proposal through the Board Examination component as part of the end of course review. The creation and adoption of the Common Core assessment system, including end of course assessments, will be complete by January 2012 for implementation in Spring 2012.

A necessary precursor to implementing this new balanced assessment system is to build assessment literacy. All educators and stakeholders need a common vocabulary in order to understand how a balanced assessment system directly impacts teaching and learning. Assessment literate educators know:

- The content and skills they are assessing
- Why they are assessing

- How best to assess the skill/concept
- How to best provide students with examples of proficient work
- What can potentially go wrong with assessment
- How to avoid the pitfalls

Teachers who are assessment literate are more likely to provide interventions to close learning gaps. To ensure assessment literacy, the following activities will commence in February 2010 (led by the Department, unless otherwise noted):

- Prepare documents with assessment literacy definitions to be distributed through the Department website to be available for stakeholders to use in various settings
- Develop/provide webinar series for P-16 educators to understand and implement new approach to formative assessment (i.e., classroom assessments for student learning)
- Create a crosswalk of the assessment system, including informational packets and placement on the Department website
- Create an infomercial that can be broadcast on public television and radio that informs stakeholders of the importance of the balanced assessment system to Kentucky
- Provide training to every District Assessment Coordinator through face-to-face meetings, webinars, and online assessment literacy modules
- Provide training to regional Educational Cooperatives and Jefferson County Public Schools through face-to-face meetings, webinars, and online assessment literacy modules
- Implement a new course for pre-service and graduate level students on effective formative assessments
- Develop a system for providing in-depth professional learning for teachers and administrators in the use of formative assessment as an ongoing diagnostic means for improving student engagement, differentiation of instruction and

instructional improvement

- Provide support to districts for the development of high-quality, curriculum-embedded, formative and interim assessments

Activity 6: Increasing access to challenging courses

One challenge facing Kentucky today is that courses required for graduation are not of consistent content and rigor across the state. At the Kentucky Board of Education meeting in December 2009, Commissioner Holliday proposed, and the Board unanimously approved, for the Department to work with the appropriate stakeholders to develop an administrative regulation requiring uniform academic course codes so that at every school across the Commonwealth, each course code will refer to the same standards and content. There is also, however, a need to increase the access to challenging courses in innovative ways, particularly given Kentucky's rural nature. In the Kentucky state legislature's 2008 regular session, Senate Bill 2 was passed, requiring a set of activities aimed at increasing all students' access to challenging coursework, particularly in STEM subject areas.

The new standards will be fewer, clearer, and higher, and while Kentucky's educators will be transforming their instruction to align to these new standards, the Commonwealth's rural nature and associated capacity constraints will require more innovative approaches to ensuring all students have access to challenging courses to enable them to meet the new standards and graduate ready for college and career. Through each of the programs described below Kentucky will expand the provision of challenging courses.

- *AdvanceKentucky* (AdvanceKY) is a joint STEM-related effort by the Kentucky Science and Technology Corporation and the Department, in partnership with the National Math and Science Initiative that has shown remarkable preliminary gains in the diversity of students engaged in Advanced Placement (AP) courses and successful on AP exams. AdvanceKy helps schools use a variety of approaches to boost AP test results, including opening AP classes to more students, counseling students, providing supplies and equipment, providing intensive training for AP teachers and offering financial incentives to

teachers for successful student outcomes. While AdvanceKY has been supported by a variety of public and private funding sources, Race to the Top funding will enable the program to expand by adding an additional 20 schools per year over the next four years; an additional 80 high schools brings us to programming in approximately 50% of Kentucky high schools. Furthermore, the focus of this expansion will be rural, high-poverty, and/or high-minority districts and schools. *(Please see the Priority 2 STEM section for more detail on STEM initiatives, and Appendix KK: AdvanceKentucky & Race to the Top for more detail on this program.)*

- *Project Lead the Way* is a nationally-recognized middle and high school curriculum focused on projects and problem-based contextual learning focused on the STEM content areas. Project Lead the Way's aim is to cultivate student interest in pursuing careers in engineering, advanced manufacturing, biomedical sciences, and energy. To ensure continued economic competitiveness, Kentucky needs more students trained and qualified for careers in these areas. Project Lead the Way makes science, math, engineering and technology engaging for students, and encourages those who may have overlooked a STEM career by opening the door to these options and opportunities. Project Lead the Way focuses on the development of logical, problem-solving skills, thereby preparing students for STEM-related postsecondary education or the technology workforce. The success of Project Lead the Way depends on integrated partnerships between elementary, middle and high schools, colleges and universities, and the business and government sectors. Similar to AdvanceKY, Project Lead the Way has been supported by both public and private funding sources. Future investment in this program will enable systemic investment in effective teaching and new equipment, enabling growth to an additional 125 public middle and high schools within 2 years, bringing the total to 73% of KY schools. The focus of this expansion will be rural, high-poverty, and/or high-minority districts and schools. *(Please see the Priority 2 STEM section for more detail on STEM initiatives, and Appendix LL: Project Lead The Way & Race to the Top and Appendix MM: SREB Research Report on Project Lead The Way for more detail on this program.)*

- The *Kentucky Virtual School* is a robust online infrastructure to provide a range of online, e-learning services to help schools and teachers meet their goals for high quality teaching, high student performance, and a strong and supportive environment for every child. This virtual platform is especially important in Kentucky due to the state's rural nature and the geographic isolation of many of its citizens. By integrating Kentucky Virtual School services in their programs, districts, schools, and teachers can find new ways to provide:
 - Access to an expanded curriculum for every student
 - Advanced Placement and foreign language courses
 - Options for credit recovery
 - Increased instructional support for at-risk students
 - Expanded choices to meet gifted and talented students' needs
 - Professional development to build instructional capacity

The Department will partner with Kentucky Education Television and existing virtual school collaboratives to expand Math and English/Language Arts online course offerings beginning in summer 2010, so that challenging courses cover all new standards by Summer 2011. Additionally, the Department will partner with community colleges to provide community college coursework online by August 2011.

- Finally, Kentucky has instituted the Individual Learning Plan – an innovated, technology-driven student planning program that gives the opportunity for students, parents, and their teachers to devise customized learning paths to college and career so that students can realize their full potential. Through an authentic participation in their Individual Learning Plan, students can identify their need for the types of challenging coursework described above, and can learn about the course options they have. The Individual Learning Plan is also a way for students, parents, and teachers to track student performance (e.g., with respect to the Common Core standards as well as ACT scores) and identify the additional supports a student may require to

ensure successful learning and progress toward college and career readiness. The platform enables students to connect with college admissions offers. The Individual Learning Plan will also be used as a repository for student work samples, and exemplars that may be used to demonstrate mastery of particular content standards. Kentucky's Governor and First Lady are committed to future public service announcements to continue to grow adoption and usage of the Individual Learning Plan amongst all students statewide.

Performance Measures Performance measures for this criterion are optional. If the State wishes to include performance measures, please enter them as rows in this table and, for each measure, provide annual targets in the columns provided.	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010- 2011	End of SY 2011- 2012	End of SY 2012- 2013	End of SY 2013- 2014
Percentage of teachers who are confident in their understanding and teaching of the Math and English/Language Arts standards	N/A	60%	75%	85%	100%
Percentage of teachers who are highly-satisfied with the high-quality instructional tools and resources (for Math and English/Language Arts) available to them	N/A	N/A	75%	85%	100%
For the (B)(3) plan, the Department has defined the performance measures above to understand teachers' perceptions of their own teaching of the new Common Core standards, and their use of the instructional tools and resources available to them as part of the implementation of the new standards. We expect that by 2014, all teachers will be confident in their understanding and teaching of the Math and English/Language Arts standards and will be highly-satisfied with the tools and resources available to them, and that this will drive increases in the effectiveness of Kentucky's teaching pool, and lead to increases in student learning statewide.					